SPORTS
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C.L.T.
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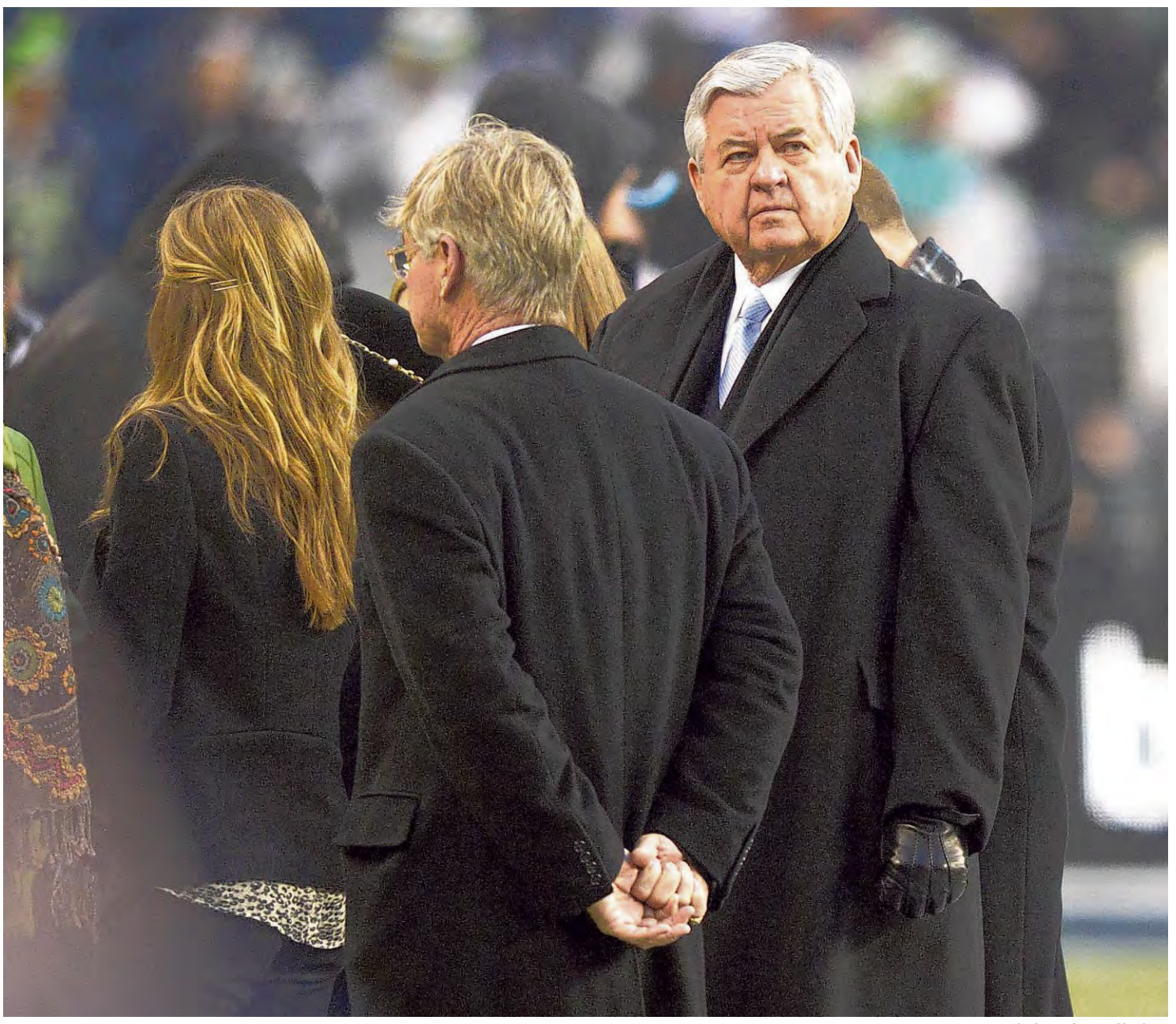
Panthers' Richardson hit with $2.75M NFL fine



DAVID T. FOSTER III Charlotte Observer file photo

Sports Illustrated reported in December that Jerry Richardson made financial settlements with at least four former Panthers employees.

Monthslong probe substantiates claims of sexual and racial misconduct by team's founder

BY JOSEPH PERSON
jperson@charlotteobserver.com

The NFL fined Carolina Panthers owner Jerry Richardson a league-record $2.75 million Thursday after a monthslong investigation substantiated claims of sexual and racial misconduct by the team's founder.

Independent investigator Mary Jo White's review of Richardson found nothing to discredit the claims of former Panthers employees, while also uncovering "similar matters that have not been the subject of public discussion," according to the NFL release.

Sports Illustrated reported in December that Richardson had made "significant" financial settlements with at least four former employees after sexual and racial misconduct claims. The same day the SI story broke, Richardson announced plans to sell the team.

White's investigation also found:

- No other Panthers employee was alleged to have engaged in misconduct, "and the review did not discover evidence of similar conduct by other employees."

(Former assistant coach Curtis Fuller resigned in May as a result of inappropriate electronic communication with female staff members. The Observer reported the volume of communications, rather than their content, was the central issue.)

- The team never reported

SEE RICHARDSON, 2A

CHUCK LIDDY cliddy@newsobserver.com

Except in Mecklenburg and Wake counties, N.C. lawmakers will run this year in election districts drawn by a Stanford law professor.

Justices clarify voting districts in NC

BY ANNE BLYTHE
ablythe@newsobserver.com

RALEIGH

The U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday upheld some of the districts drawn by a Stanford University law professor to be used this year to elect state lawmakers, but not in Wake and Mecklenburg counties.

That means North Carolina voters will go to the polls in November to elect General Assembly members from districts that were in place in February, when candidates filed for office.

"Thanks to the dedication of the plaintiffs in this case, voters in North Carolina will finally be able to vote in state legislative districts drawn without unconstitutional racial discrimination," said Allison Riggs, senior voting rights attorney for the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, which represented Sandra Little Covington, a former lawmaker, and other challengers in the case. "The order from the Supreme Court today sends the message loud and clear that discrimination, even if hidden under a self-proclaimed veil of ignorance, will not be tolerated in the redistricting process. We're glad to see the district court's careful, well-documented findings on this front affirmed."

In January, a three-judge panel ordered North Carolina lawmakers to use maps created by Nathaniel Persily, a Stanford University law professor they hired to reshape election districts the General Assembly had adopted in August 2017.

The lawmakers had been ordered to redraw election districts mid-decade after the U.S. Supreme

SEE REDISTRICTING, 3A

5 dead as gunman goes on rampage at Maryland newspaper; suspect arrested

BY BRIAN WITTE
Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, MD.

A gunman opened fire in a targeted attack on a newspaper office in Maryland's capital Thursday, killing five people and wounding others before being taken into custody in what appeared to be one of the deadliest attacks on journalists in U.S. history, police and witnesses said.

Police said the suspect was a white man in his late 30s whose rampage at The Capital Gazette followed social media threats directed at the newspaper. CNN reported that the man's name is Jarrod Warren Ramos, according to multiple law enforcement sources.

Authorities said the man entered the building and "looked for his victims." He threw smoke grenades and fired a shotgun at his victims, according to Anne Arundel County acting police Chief William Krampf.

"This person was prepared today to come in, this person was prepared to shoot people. His intent was to cause harm," Krampf said.

Krampf declined to identify the suspect but said he was a Maryland resident and search warrants were being sought for his home.

Phil Davis, a reporter who covers courts and crime for the paper, tweeted that the gunman shot out the glass door to the office and fired into the newsroom, sending people scrambling for cover under desks.

"A single shooter shot multiple people at my office, some of whom are dead," he wrote.

Davis added: "There is nothing more terrifying than hearing multiple people get shot while you're under your desk and then hear the

SEE SHOOTING, 3A

MORE INSIDE
The U.S. Supreme Court refused to review a ruling about prayers before Rowan County commissioners meetings. 4A

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